

**EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES**

Meeting of February 4, 2009

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Members Present: Kim Bobola, Ph.D. (Chair); Bill Strassberger (Parliamentarian); Colleen Ionata (Vice Chair); David Kochanski, Esq.; G. Stanley Doore; Allan Mulligan; Vanessa Ali; Sheala Durant; Alfreda Hunt Payne, Ph.D.; Anthony Ramirez; Benoy Thomas; Marva R. Deskins, Esq.; Amjad Chaudhry; Thomas Aylward and Dwayne Parris. John Thomas; Eric Luedtke; and John Fausti, Esq.

Members Absent: None

Staff: Chuck Crisostomo (Asst. Director, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center) and Chris Briggs (Principal Administrative aide)

Guests: Thomas J. Street: Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Mara M. Parker (Staff, Councilmember Marc Elrich's office), Dan Mchugh-DHCA , Reginald Jetter-DPS Claire Iseli-District 4 council office -Barbara Foresti, Frank Caruso, Claudia Caruso.

Citizen's Forum: Chair Bobola welcomed everyone. Guests were asked to introduce themselves to the Board. No concerns were raised.

Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Bobola asked for a review of the minutes of the ECCAB Meeting of January 7, 2009.

Motion [February 4, 2009 - 1] A motion to approve the minutes of January 7th was offered. Freeda asked that they be amended to include her visits to STAPLES and the Adventist Food and Book Store. *The amended motion was seconded and approved.*

Guest Speaker Tom Street

Mr. Street addressed the board and public discussing the results of the CODE ENFORCEMENT WORKGROUP.

He discussed the workgroups mission and recommendations on various County Code issues concerning but not limited to overcrowding, parking in residential neighborhoods, home construction., and increasing fines for code violations.

Tom also explained that the Board of Appeals has been removed from the complaint process and that disputes will now go directly to court.

A member of the public questioned the public input of the workgroups findings. Tom explained that the workgroups used input from various community associations and cultural groups around the county.

Allan Mulligan asked for a telephone number that would be helpful to county residents to report code violations. Tom provided the DHCA complaint line, 240-777-3785, as that contact number

Director's Report: Chuck Crisostomo, Assistant Director

- MLK Day at EMRSC. Chuck thanked Allan Mulligan for his help in planning and marketing and Bill Strassberger and his son for volunteering on Jan, 19,2009
- Informed board members of the latest issue of the East County "INTERCOM" newsletter
- County Executive's Budget Forum – A detailed OMB presentation was followed by the County Executives question and answer session. 75 residents participated
- The Board was informed about EMRSC's upcoming Montgomery College classes in Spanish (2/9) and Creative Writing (2/11).
- Bill 27-08 passed (1/27/09) and will be effective 7/1/2009; prohibits parking of certain commercial vehicles and recreational vehicles in certain zones.

Chair's Report: Kim Bobola

- Kim thanked Amjad Chaudhry and Alan Mulligan for attending the County Executives meeting. Kim asked Alan to relay the County Executives compliments for the ECCAB integrating the priorities of the County Executive and those of the Advisory Board.

Mara Parker (for Councilmember Elrich)

- Mara spoke eloquently about the loss of Donald Praisner and offered support on behalf on Councilmember Elrich.
- Claire Iseli- also spoke lovingly about Councilman Praisners death and service to the community. She spoke about the Councilman's desire to have his vacated seat appointed and discussed the county charter and the possibility of District 4 being unrepresented during the budget process.

Committee Reports

Outreach Committee: Marva Deskins, Chair

- Marva discussed a problem with providing a gift for the essay contest that is solicited from businesses in county.
- She indicated that EMRSC Director Anise Key Brown suggested working with EMRSC Program Manager Gwen Haney on a youth project with an April 25th Forum date. The Committee has agreed and is moving forward.

Services Committee: Anthony Ramirez, Chair

- Anthony and Sheala both discussed community concerns and gang prevention.

- Sheala spoke about “environmental security” measures being considered in the construction of the White Oak Recreation center. She commented on community concerns about “parties” at the center attracting a criminal element. She reported that Recreation will use off duty police officers and that certain functions will not be permitted.

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee: Tom Aylward, Chair

- Tom Aylward reported. That DPWT and the State of Maryland are at an impasse concerning the Burtonsville Shopping Center Development site and its ingress and egress onto route 198. He stated that the state owns Route 198 and that both the State and County are trying to reach a compromise.

Old Business :

None

New Business:

Motion [February 4, 2009 – 2] Bill Strassberger made the following motion:

“That the East County Citizens Advisory Board express its support for a change to the current policy regarding the ability of county law enforcement officials to check the immigration status of persons arrested for dangerous crimes. We support Montgomery County Police, in collaboration with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), in enforcing federal immigration laws by ICE. We note that Montgomery County police will not be enforcing immigration laws unless appropriate agreements are made and training takes place. We welcome a change that would allow Montgomery County police to query the ICE Law Enforcement Support Center and allow ICE to determine a person’s immigration status. We understand that any action regarding the person’s status or violation of immigration law will be handled by ICE and not the Montgomery County police. We also highly recommend that a broad and multi-language education campaign be conducted to announce this policy change to County residents.”

“The Board recognizes Montgomery County’s long standing tradition that values the contributions of our diverse, productive and hardworking legal immigrant communities and supports policies that strengthen the public’s trust and protects individual civil liberties.”

The motion was seconded, and after lengthy discussion:

The Chair called for a vote by show of hands and the motion passed 13 yeas to 3 nays.

Motion [February 4, 2009 – 3]

A motion was made and seconded for ECCAB to support the appointment, by the County Council, of a new District 4 representative.

After much debate about the pros and cons of the appointment versus an election process the *Chair called for vote and the motion failed 3 yeas to 11 nays.*

Announcements: None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

The next meeting of ECCAB is scheduled for March 4, 2009.